

P. D. Copy


8700586
✓ 2/19/87

[Burbank Planning Dept.] [1992]
CONSERVATION ELEMENT

INSTITUTE OF GOVERNMENTAL
STUDIES LIBRARY

FEB 19 1987

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA



Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2024 with funding from
State of California and California State Library

<https://archive.org/details/C124881563>

TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | <u>Page</u> |
|-------------------------------|-------------|
| I Introduction | 1 |
| II The Verdugo Mountains | 2 |
| III The Community Environment | 12 |
| IV Funding | 15 |
| V Revision | 16 |
| VI Appendix | 17 |

PREFACE

Though resources should be enjoyed to the utmost, we must protect their flow from irreversible reduction. Unless a reasonable effort is made to keep stock resources from becoming unavailable in the future, large numbers of people will be deprived of their use.

While we are hopeful that technology will so broaden our resource base that we will not have to worry about the depletion of our present resources, we generally seem to prefer using these luxuries while they last to sharing them with our descendants.

And, as has always been the case, man does not know what lies ahead of him. Can such ignorance justify a failure to plan on the basis of what is known, while relying on what is unknown?

CONSERVATION ELEMENT

Introduction

The Conservation Element sets forth to identify in detail, the community's resources and to pose guidelines that will determine the highest and best use of the resource, thus preserving and enhancing them for the benefit of this generation and the generations to come. Those considerations relevant to the policies and recommendations this element establishes include the following: The scarcity of the resource and the ability of the community to replenish it, whether the resource is or is not finite, and the community's short and long range needs and goals.

Resources, even at the community level, are intimately associated with the concept of conservation. Because of the close relationship, resources must be studied within the fabric of their fundamental role: that of contributing to our wants and needs. The role of conservation, is then, a managing of resources in such a way as to maximize the satisfaction of human wants.

More specifically, the role of this element is one of setting into motion a continuing mechanism for the analysis of the way in which our resources are used, and the ultimate effect on the environment.

THE VERDUGO MOUNTAINS

As Burbank's most prominent physiographical feature, the Verdugo Mountains represent a dramatic visual change from the continuous suburban form of home, shopping center, factory and highway. Rising at the eastern terminus of the San Fernando Valley, the Verdugos illustrate the delicate balance indigenous to such a range of mountains. If used improperly, the Verdugo Mountains, as they have existed through the millennium, shall be lost forever. Such a resource seldom escapes use - but use must not mean abuse. Burbank has a definite responsibility to preserve, to the greatest extent possible, this lofty expanse of mountains that serve as a sanctuary for an abundance of plant and animal life. If the greatest numbers of individuals are to derive the maximum enjoyment from these mountains, the Verdugos must then be judiciously protected.

Physiographic - Geologic Characteristics

Situated in a northwest/southeast direction, the Verdugo Mountain range may be considered a subsidiary range to the massive San Gabriel mountains. Ranging in elevation within Burbank from 950 to 2930 feet, the mountains peak in the southeast where they slope dramatically inside Glendale.

The mountain bedrock is composed of foliated metamorphic rocks, placerita in formation, which are locally interspersed by granodiorite.

The foliated slopes dip at steep angles generally towards the north northwest and expose the present granodiorite in the form of irregular thick dikes. The rock is blocky and fractured in character.

When the slopes become saturated with water, the composite is generally insufficient in strength to retain a high degree of stability. The soil is thus susceptible to erosion during prolonged periods of rain; and this condition is far more pronounced after a fire has stripped the vegetation from the slopes and left little, if any, remaining watershed. The alluvium, having washed down from the canyon slopes, consists largely of weathered rock fragments, silty sand, and gravel.

Animal and Plant Inhabitation

The Verdugo Mountains provide a natural refuge for a variety of animal life. Squirrels, birds and rabbits are in abundance, as well as numerous species of small reptiles. The mountain slopes also provide vast expanses, away from an urban population, for deer and coyote to roam.

Indigeneous to the mountains habitat are wildflowers and shrubs, sticky monkey flowers, and prickly phlox. Sycamores, alders and oaks are natural to the mountain canyons along with chaparrel which spreads across the slopes. The vegetation on the eastern side of

the Verdugos, facing the La Crescenta Valley, is much more lush than on the Burbank Mountain face, which is illustrative of a more arid environment.

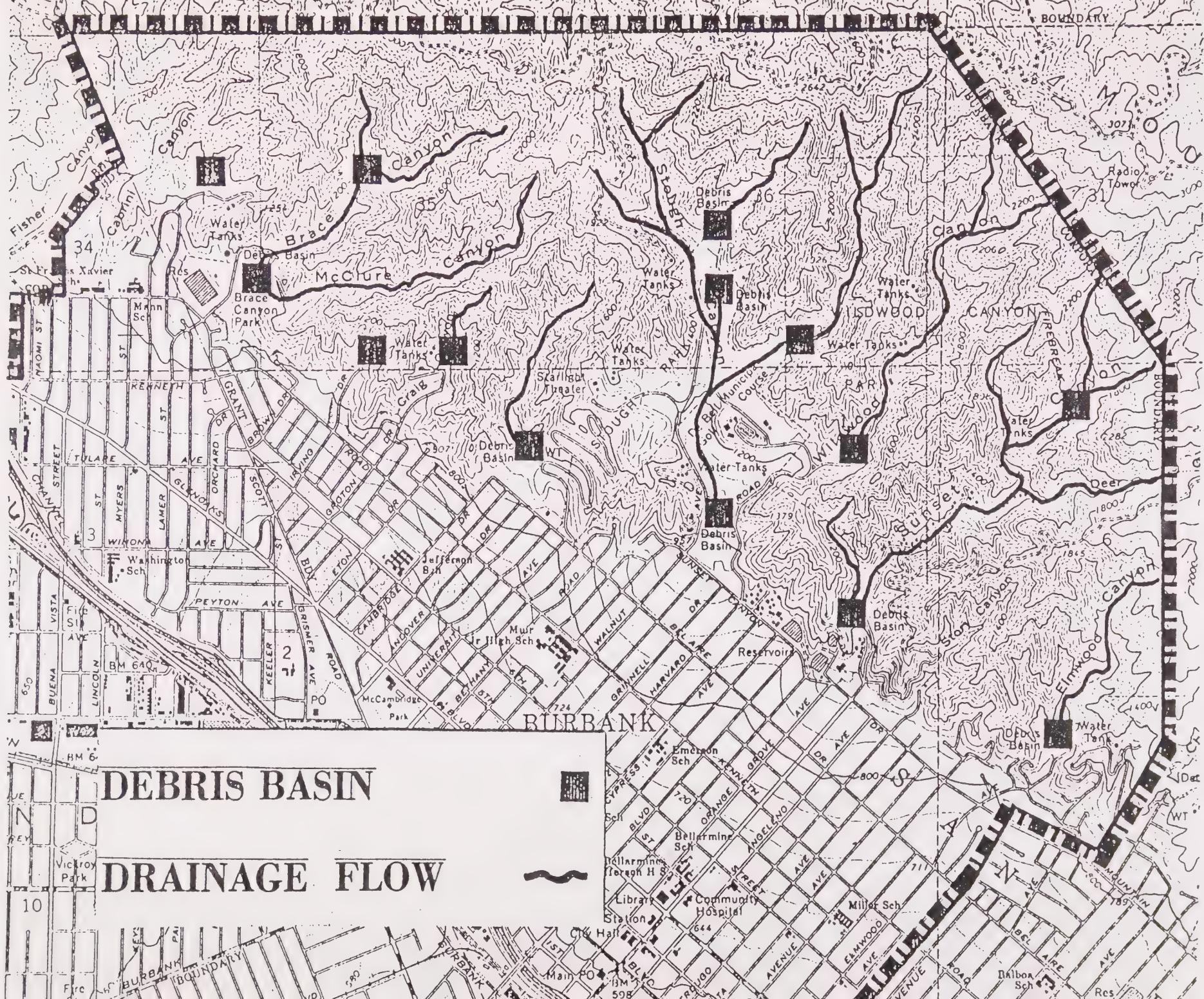
Utilities

Public utilities within the Burbank portion of the Verdugo Range are quite limited. Water facilities are presently located to serve existing foothill residential dwellings and the recreational facilities at Stough and Wildwood Canyon Parks plus the DeBell Golf Course. In addition to residential dwelling units, sewerage facilities are provided only for the DeBell Golf Course. Generally, it may be said the public utilities are presently provided only where the demand has been sufficient to warrant their installation.

The following map illustrates the location of existing debris basins in the mountains in relationship to drainage flows.

Hillside Preservation and Residential Development

The Verdugo Mountains represent the only area within the City of Burbank that is left in its relative natural form. Although residential development in the mountains is possible, the feasibility of intensive development is challenged on the basis of the rugged topography, the probable difficulties encountered when providing ingress and egress due to the angles of the grades, control of erosion



DEBRIS BASIN

DRAINAGE FLOW



subsequent to grading; as well as cost incurred by the City, which would not be absorbed by the unit tax contribution, and of significant importance are aesthetic considerations.

The 1964 Burbank General Plan concluded that mountainside development "would result in unsound, unsafe and unreasonable utilization of the land and the interests of 'community' health, safety and general welfare would not be 'enhanced' by such development". The 1964 Plan claims extensive residential development would result in the following:

1. An unsafe and unreasonable system of access roads. Access roads with continual one and two mile runs on a 15% gradient and traversing over a circuitous alignment do not represent safe or reasonable access. To construct these access roads at these admittedly low standards would require cutting and filling of many of the ridges and alleys to depths in excess of 200 feet.
2. Heavy cutting and filling causes excessive scarring of the natural slopes with the attendant problems of controlling erosion. The ridges and valleys of the Verdugo Mountains would be transformed into a series of arbitrary scars, exposed and permanently visible.
3. Excessive cost in police and fire protection to the people of Burbank. Because of the distance, steepness and time

factor involved in moving fire equipment from the nearest substation to the upper ridges of the mountains, logic would suggest that one, two or even three additional fire stations, complete with equipment and personnel, would have to be built to provide the standard of fire protection comparable to that which now exists in other portions of the City.

4. City police officers assigned to patrol the mountain area would not be available as "back-up personnel" for emergency duty in other sections of the City because of the time and distance involved. This would mean additional costs to the taxpayer of Burbank if the mountain area were to have the quality of police protection that now prevails throughout the developed portions of the City.
5. An improper relationship between homes and school due to the limited usable land area for concentrated residential development. Residential development in the mountain area could be an expensive and impractical transportation program to be initiated by the school administration to transport children to and from school.

A report conducted for the City of Palo Alto, titled Open Space vs. Development, determines that, as previously stated in the Plan, foothill development costs would outweigh taxes and revenues the City

would incur. The Verdugos are mountains, indeed, and not foothills as in the case of Palo Alto. Therefore, the finding of the report is far more significant in Burbank's case.

Recommendations

The information herein serves as the basis for the following recommendations:

1. The Verdugo Mountains are an extremely valuable and irreplaceable natural resource. The land use and development policy for the mountains must set forth to protect the ecological integrity of the mountains. (Burbank General Plan, 1964)
2. Development in the Verdugo Mountains should be limited as much as possible to areas below the Rancho Providencia line. This recommendation is supported by the Federally approved Open Space Grant the City has won for the acquisition of land, and its development for regional park purposes. The suitability of use for the area below the line needs careful study, with attention being given to protect the integrity of the mountains. Citizen input should be included in such a study.
3. All development in the Verdugos should maximize environmental protection by evaluating change as to its effects

upon the total mountain area. (Burbank General Plan, 1964)

An environmental impact study would achieve this recommendation.

4. Access into the Verdugos should be strictly controlled.
(Burbank General Plan, 1964)
5. Alteration of natural slopes by grading should be minimized.
(Burbank General Plan, 1964) When grading is necessary, it should be done in such a way as to permit replanting of the slopes. New grading techniques should be explored.
6. All development proposals for the mountains should include a detailed analysis of costs and benefits resultant from development, including the additional cost which the City will incur for providing service and the needs for additional taxation. (Burbank General Plan, 1964)
7. In order to meet additional service-oriented costs, a special tax assessment district should be established for each new development.
8. Studies should be implemented to determine the capability of reducing the effects of scarring resulting from the City's sanitary land fill project.

9. Study the feasibility of introducing reclaimed water into the Verdugos.
10. That in the interests of the health, safety and general welfare of the Burbank community, the City continue its policy of acquiring the majority of mountain land above the Rancho Providencia line, for the highest and best use of the mountains as park lands.

Significance for Conservation

If action is taken to implement the recommendation of this section, the end result will be the conservation of the mountain area, in accordance with a general policy of conservation. Native flora and fauna presently located in the Verdugo Range will be protected and perpetuated. This type of preservation will allow man to enjoy the natural state of the Verdugos as well as to allow the flora and fauna to flourish in a pastoral setting.

One of the main items to be conserved is that of physical setting. The Verdugo Mountains provide an exceptional urban design element for the community. If development is allowed to envelop the Verdugos, this visual element of dominance and security will be completely expended.

A conservation policy would allow for the preservation of all existing plant and animal life. With the possible addition of reclaimed water

into the regional park facility, additional botanical growths would take place. This additional water would provide the necessary ingredient for the flourishing of deciduous trees, plus additional scrubs and ground cover. A regional park facility located within the Verdugos would provide a measure of psychologic conservation. Within the framework of the rapid pace of urban life style, a definite need exists today for a serene pastoral area which people may frequent in their leisure. The Verdugos could provide just such a facility to allow persons of all age groups the opportunity to escape the metropolis for a moment or for an entire week-end.

Under such a conservation policy, three types of increased protection for the City would result. Additional protection for the citizens of Burbank will be provided in the overall areas of fire, erosion, and flood.

With the addition of reclaimed water on the Burbank portion of Verdugos, the possibility of hillside brush fires would be greatly reduced.

Protection against soil erosion and flood hazard will be provided by the same factor - increased tree and ground cover. With the addition of the reclaimed water irrigation system, a large increase in trees, shrubs and ground cover plants would flourish. This new

growth of flora will provide a sizeable retaining force on the earth's mantle. In so doing, the addition of this plant growth will greatly reduce the hazard of soil erosion.

The Relationship of the Conservation to the Open Space Element

The intent of the Conservation and Open Space elements are similar: the preservation and protection of lands for the enjoyment of the whole community. Within the Conservation Element, the park concept, supported by the Open Space Grant, was discussed. The importance of the park relative to Open Space preservation shall be discussed at length in the Open Space Element.

THE COMMUNITY ENVIRONMENT

The Environmental Quality Act of 1970 (see Appendix) was authored by the California legislature for the purpose of setting up a review procedure for the evaluation of projects which are deemed to have a "significant effect on the environment." A recent California Supreme Court decision has interpreted this to mean both public and private projects are to be subjected to an environmental impact analysis if a city's general plan is without a conservation element.

It is the recommendation of this element that impact reports for specific types of projects be continued at least until such time as a more complete analysis of the Burbank environment is made. This analysis, to be an amendment to this element, should include the following:

1. Population projection and increased utility needs; water, gas, electric and sewage treatment.
2. Commercial, industrial and residential expansion needs.
3. Public school capacities.
4. Balance of land use.
5. Open space/recreation needs.
6. City-wide geologic conditions.

Subsequent to this analysis, specific recommendations shall be made for the maintenance and/or expansion of existing City utility facilities. Special attention should be given to the capacity of the water reclamation plant and the use potential of regulated water, including sale of recycled water to industry and the replenishment of the ground water table.

If legislative intent is to be met, the following points should be included in environmental impact reports:

1. The probable impact of the proposed project on the total environment: "Environment" refers to the totality of man's surroundings; both social and physical, both natural and manmade. It includes human, plant and animal communities and the forces that act on all three.
2. Any probable adverse environmental effects which cannot be avoided such as water or air pollution, damage to wildlife populations and habitat, excessive noise or other consequences adverse to the environmental.
3. Mitigation measures proposed to minimize the impact: An examination and evaluation of alternative features or designs for the project which may reduce adverse effects on the environment or increase beneficial effect is essential. Environmental enhancement features of a project should be balanced against possible detrimental effects of other features of the project.
4. Alternatives to the proposed project: An examination and objective evaluation of alternative actions including their costs and impact on the environment that might avoid or minimize some or all of the adverse environmental effects is essential. The alternative action of "no-project" shall also be evaluated.

5. The relationship between local short-term uses of man's environment and the maintenance and enhancement or long-term productivity: Each project should be assessed for its cumulative and long-term effects from the perspective that each generation is trustee of the environment for succeeding generations.
6. Any irreversible and irretrievable commitments of resources which would be involved in the proposed action should it be implemented. This required identification of the extent to which the action curtails or expands the range of beneficial uses of the environment.

FUNDING

A critical component of any implementation program is the method of financing used to complete the task at hand. A comprehensive study, such as the one proposed by this element, would likely require additional manpower and many manhours to finish the detailed analysis necessary.

As a supplement to the new federal revenue sharing program, specific programs for community planning should be maintained. Some offer the potential of full funding. It is the recommendation of this element that these programs be explored for their applicability to Burbank.

REVISION

Considering the extent of analysis of the environmental needs of the community, subsequent to the conclusion of the supplementary report, another complete analysis should not be necessary for 5 to 10 years after the adoption of the element. At such time, the effort should include participants from both the public service section and the general community. Such a combined effort will, with greater precision, have the opportunity of outlining the goals and meeting the objectives of the City at that time.

APPENDIX

PUBLIC RESOURCES CODE

(Environmental Quality Act of 1970)

Chapter 3. State Agencies, Boards and Commissions

Sec.

- 21100. Environmental impact report on proposed state projects.
- 21101. Environmental impact report on proposed federal projects.
- 21102. Request for or authorization of expenditure of funds; statement of effect on environment.
- 2103. Office of planning and research; coordination of preparation and evaluation of environmental impact reports.
- 21104. Consultation with other governmental agency prior to preparation of detailed statement.
- 21105. Environmental impact report and comments as part of regular project report; availability to legislature and general public.
- 21106. Request of funds to protect environment.
- 21107. Review of statutory authority, rules, regulations, policies and procedures; proposals for compliance.

Chapter 3 added by Stats. 1970, c. 1433, pg. 2781, § 1.

- 21100. Environmental Impact report on proposed state projects.

All state agencies, boards, and commissions shall include in any report on any project they propose to carry out which could have a significant effect on the environment of the state, a detailed statement by the responsible state official setting forth the following:

- (a) The environmental impact of the proposed action.
- (b) Any adverse environmental effects which cannot be avoided if the proposal is implemented.

(c) Mitigation measures proposed to minimize the impact.

(d) Alternatives to the proposed action.

(e) The relationship between local short-term uses of man's environment and the maintenance and enhancement of long-term productivity.

(f) Any irreversible environmental changes which would be involved in the proposed action should it be implemented.
(Added by Stats. 1970, c. 1433, p. 2781, § 1.)

21101. Environmental Impact report on proposed federal projects

In regard to any proposed federal project in this state which may have a significant effect on the environment and on which the state officially comments, the state officials responsible for such comments shall include in their report a detailed statement setting forth the matters specified in Section 21100 prior to transmitting the comments of the state to the federal government. No report shall be transmitted to the federal government unless it includes such a detailed statement as to the matters specified in Section 21100.

(Added by Stats. 1970, c. 1433, p. 2782, § 1.)

21102. Request for or authorization of expenditure of funds;
statement of effect on environment

No state agency, board, or commission shall request funds, nor shall any state agency, board, or commission which authorizes expenditures of funds, other than funds appropriated in the Budget Act, authorize funds for expenditure for any project, other than a project involving only planning, which could have a significant effect on the environment unless such request or authorization is accompanied by a detailed statement setting forth the matters specified in Section 21100.

(Added by Stats. 1970, c. 1433, p. 2782, § 1.)

21106. Request of funds to protect environment.

All state agencies, boards, and commissions shall request in their budgets the funds necessary to protect the environment in relation to problems caused by their activities.
(Added by Stats. 1970, c. 1433, p. 2782, § 1.)

21107. Review of statutory authority, rules, regulations, policies and procedures; proposals for compliance.

Every state agency, board and commission shall review its present statutory authority, rules, regulations, policies and procedures to determine any inconsistencies or deficiencies in such provisions which would hinder compliance with the provisions of this division, and shall propose to the Governor and the Legislature no later than January 1971, any measures necessary to comply with the intent, policies, and procedures of this division.
(Added by Stats. 1970, c. 1433, p. 2782, § 1.)



0124881563

Abstract of the 1971-72 Annual Report of the

Department of Education, Health, and Social Services

for the year ending 31st March 1972

Published by the Department of Education, Health, and Social Services

London: HMSO, 1972. Pp. 100. 5s.

Abstract of the 1971-72 Annual Report of the

Department of Education, Health, and Social Services

for the year ending 31st March 1972

Published by the Department of Education, Health, and Social Services

London: HMSO, 1972. Pp. 100. 5s.

Abstract of the 1971-72 Annual Report of the

Department of Education, Health, and Social Services

for the year ending 31st March 1972

Published by the Department of Education, Health, and Social Services

London: HMSO, 1972. Pp. 100. 5s.

Abstract of the 1971-72 Annual Report of the
Department of Education, Health, and Social Services
for the year ending 31st March 1972
Published by the Department of Education, Health, and Social Services
London: HMSO, 1972. Pp. 100. 5s.